

CLAIMS:

WE CLAIM AS OUR INVENTION:

1. A method to enable and disable a first muting function, to mute sound signal transmission between at least one telephone and another selected telephone during a multi-telephone conference call, said method comprising implementing a system in a central office servicing said at least one telephone, which comprises establishing a keypad signal recognition system wherein a specific keypad actuation during said telephone call instructs said central office to enable said first muting function and wherein a second keypad actuation during said telephone call instructs said central office to disable said first muting function.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said keypad actuation is implemented on said at least one telephone.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said enabling of said muting function is by attenuation of said sound signal transmission from said another selected telephone at said central office.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the multi-telephone conference call includes a plurality of additional telephones that are connected in communication with said at least one telephone and said at least one least one telephone is enabled to mute said additional telephones.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the keypad signal recognition system is set such that only a keypad actuation on said at least one telephone during said telephone call enables said first muting function.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the keypad signal recognition system is set such that only a keypad actuation on said another selected telephone during said telephone call enables said first muting function.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the keypad signal recognition system is set such that only the keypad actuation on said at least one telephone during said telephone call disables said first muting function.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the keypad signal recognition system is set such that only the keypad actuation on said another selected telephone during said telephone call disables said first muting function.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein said another selected telephone is a mobile telephone.

10. A telephone system central office-enabled muting service, comprising:

- a. establishing a keypad recognition system that recognizes each of one or more keypad signals, or combination of keypad signals, from a telephone system user's telephone as a user-provided instruction to enable or to disable one or more voice signal transmission and voice signal receipt muting features;
- b. providing one or more types of central office-enabled muting services to one or more users of said telephone system, wherein each of said one or more types of services provides a specific set of muting options to said one or more users thereof; and
- c. for said user provided with one of said one or more types of central office-enabled muting services, providing ongoing actuation of muting options within said specific set based on receipt in said central office of said one or more keypad signals, or combination of keypad signals, said signals, or combination of keypad signals, being user-provided instructions, to enable or to disable one or more voice signal transmission and voice signal receipt muting features.

11. The telephone system central office-enabled muting service of claim 10, wherein said keypad recognition system includes signals, or combination of keypad signals, that provide for one or more conference call leaders in a telephone conference call to send instructions to said central office that actuates the enablement and disablement of a muting function selected from a group consisting of: muting the sound

transmission signals from one or more members of said conference call; muting the sound receipt signals from one or more members of said conference call; and muting the sound transmission signal and the sound receipt signal, at the same time, from one or more members of said conference call.

12. The telephone system central office-enabled muting service of claim 10 wherein said user's telephone is a mobile telephone.

13. The telephone system central office-enabled muting service of claim 10, wherein the pressing of a single keypad is programmed to simultaneously enable muting of voice signal transmission and increase amplitude of voice signal receipt.